


MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

ACTION 02407 (Revised)

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MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT
FROM: GENERAL ALEXANDER M. HAIG, JR. 
SUBJECT: Bangladesh Relief Program

The first phase of contributions to the Bangladesh relief effort has now been rounded out, and we must consider a second contribution. Reports are mounting that the famine which was feared for last fall now could come in the late spring, although this can be avoided. What is done now before the beginning of the rainy season in June will have an important impact.

You will recall that for an initial contribution you authorized a donation of food as long as our contribution was no more than one-third of the total international effort. We have contributed so far some \$37 million worth of grain and \$10 million on edible oil.

The other international contributions now add up to \$300 million, of which \$192 million has been provided bilaterally, not channeled through the UN -- \$162 million comes from India, about \$20 million from the USSR and \$10 million from Pakistan. If the US were to contribute one-third of the contributions made against the requirements described by the UN, our share could go up to about \$100 million at this point. The SRG discussed whether bilateral contributions should be included in the base from which we calculate our share. The point was made that our objective is to meet a humanitarian need, and any contribution can fairly be counted if it is directed at that need.

AID is recommending that we now move some \$35 million in cash appropriated by the Congress for the Bangladesh relief effort. This would be used principally to improve the transportation system which is necessary to distribute food around the country as well as for other similar projects necessary to the relief effort.

In short, now that Congress has appropriated the special relief funds you requested last October; now that the needs in Bangladesh are more precisely

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June 9, 2005

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identified; and now that the scope of the international effort has become apparent -- we are in a position to begin adding cash contributions to our commodity assistance. We can do so and still remain within a one-third share. Doing so this week will help to blunt Congressional charges that the Administration is not using the money Congress appropriated.

Recommendation: That you approve an additional \$35 million contribution in cash through the UN for the relief effort in Bangladesh.

Approve

*Henry F. Hall
for Pres.*

Other _____

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